



National League of Cities

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20004

www.nlc.org

August 1, 2005

Dear Local Elected Official:

The National League of Cities has designated **September 26-30, 2005**, as the Sixth Annual Race Equality Week, a time to reaffirm our commitment to eliminating all forms of racism and discrimination in our communities. Racism and discrimination are major problems for America's cities and towns. In our view, solving racial issues means moving from being a part of the problem to becoming part of the solution.

As President of the National League of Cities, I have dedicated myself and NLC to continuing the efforts of Past President Bob Knight, who helped to bring national attention to the issue of racism in America, and the agenda of Past President, Charlie Lyons, "Resurrecting the American Dream", which addressed extreme inequalities based on race, class and geography.

We must continue to take steps to heal the nation through awareness and affirmative action. I hope that you will join city and town officials all across the nation in September to demonstrate your commitment to this important goal.

The purpose of this week is two fold: first, to spotlight the issues of racism and discrimination and the problems that many are still subjected to; and second, to showcase what cities across the country are doing to promote racial equality.

I encourage you to support this effort and to share your experiences with us by issuing an city proclamation, holding a press conference or program, etc. You can download our action kit at our website at www.nlc.org. The kit includes a form for you to describe what activities your organization has/will undertake (n) to combat racism or discrimination, a sample press release, sample proclamation, and other practical information to help you plan your activities.

If you have any questions, email Gwen Wright at wright@nlc.org or call (202) 626-3037.

Sincerely,

Anthony A. Williams, President
Mayor, Washington D.C.

**RACE
EQUALITY
WEEK**

Sept. 26-30, 2005



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1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

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August 1, 2005

Dear Organizational Leader:

The National League of Cities has designated **September 26-30, 2005**, as the **SIXTH ANNUAL RACE EQUALITY WEEK**, a time to reaffirm our commitment to ensuring equity and opportunity in our organizations and communities. Racism, discrimination and inequalities continue to present challenges and hinder progress. In our view, addressing these issues means moving from being a part of the problem to becoming part of the solution.

As Executive Director of the National League of Cities, I have dedicated myself and NLC to continuing the legacy of Past President Bob Knight, former Mayor, Wichita, Kansas who helped to bring national attention to the issue of racism in America, and Past President, Charles Lyons, Selectman, Arlington, Massachusetts, whose call to action proclaimed "Resurrecting the American Dream", which addressed extreme inequalities based on race, class and geography.

As we continue to take steps to strengthen the nation through awareness and education, we hope that your organization will join NLC and our members during the week of September 26-30, 2005 to demonstrate your commitment to this important goal. The purpose of this week is two fold: first to spotlight the issues of racism and discrimination and the problems that may be still subjected to; and second, to showcase what organizations are doing to promote racial equality.

I encourage you to support this effort and to share your experiences with us by issuing an organizational proclamation, holding a press conference or program, etc. You can download our action kit at our website at www.nlc.org. The kit includes a form for you to describe what activities your organization has/will undertake (n) to combat racism or discrimination, a sample press release, sample proclamation, and other practical information to help you plan your activities.

If you have any questions, please e-mail Gwen Wright at wright@nlc.org or call (202) 626-3037.

Yours Truly,

Donald J. Borut
Executive Director
National League of Cities

**RACE
EQUALITY
WEEK**

Sept. 26-30, 2005



SIXTH ANNUAL NATIONAL **RACE EQUALITY WEEK**

September 26-30, 2005

The National League of Cities Local Schedule of Events (Suggestions)

Monday – Proclaim National Race Equality Week

Cities will kick off National Race Equality Week by issuing a proclamation and a schedule of daily events/press releases on what they will spotlight during the week.

Tuesday – Promoting Home Ownership Day

This day will be dedicated to highlighting programs and opportunities that increase home ownership.

Wednesday – Promoting Equity in Economic Opportunity Day

This day is dedicated highlighting programs and activities that focus on poverty reduction and job creation.

Thursday – Promoting Equity in Education Day

This day is dedicated to cities to highlight positive programs and initiatives that are helping to reduce the achievement gap, decrease the drop out rate and improving equity in education.

Friday – Celebrating Cultural Identity Day

The final day of the week will be a day to renew and celebrate the commitment to ensuring race equality for all communities and to release to the media initiatives to be undertaken in the coming 12 months that will help achieve this goal.



Race Equality Week
Sept. 26-30, 2005

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

[Date]

For Information Contact:

[Name/phone # of press contact]

[Second name/phone # for contact]

[City] Plans "Race Equality Week" [Event] for [Date]

[City, date] ----- To reaffirm its commitment to racial equality, [City] will hold an [event and location] the week of September 26-30, 2005, in honor of the National League of Cities (NLC) Sixth Annual Race Equality Week. The week is used to spotlight race issues and success stories that still confront American local elected officials everyday.

There are daily reminders to us all of how important this issue still is in America, and that promoting racial equality and ending racism requires awareness, commitment, and action," said [Name of City Official]. "This is an opportunity for [City] to stand up and be counted in an ongoing effort to make sure our community fosters racial equality and harmony."

[Details about the event]

Cities and towns throughout the United States have planned events for the week of September 26 to renew their commitment to promoting racial equality. The NLC is coordinating this event in a nationwide campaign to promote racial equality.

The National League of Cities is the oldest and largest national organization for American cities. NLC serves as a resource and advocate for 18,000 cities, towns and villages of all sizes, from New York City to Bee Cave, Texas, which collectively serve 225 million people. Visit www.nlc.org. The NLC Race Equality Week is being conducted in conjunction with 49 state municipal leagues and NLC's member towns and cities throughout the United States.

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For more news and information about NLC and local government, visit our Internet Website:
<http://www.nlc.org>

RACE
EQUALITY
WEEK



Race Equality Week
Sept. 26-30, 2005

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION/RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the National League of Cities is committed to promoting racial equality and justice as a fundamental aspect of a healthy community; and

WHEREAS, the National League of Cities has urged local officials across the country to join together in a national campaign to promote racial equality and justice; and

WHEREAS, by resolution of the National League of Cities, we declare racism unjust and advocate equal rights for all; and

WHEREAS, by Act of Congress of the United States dated July 2, 1964, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was adopted banning discrimination because of a person's color, race, national origin, religion, or sex; and

WHEREAS, by Act of Congress of the United States dated July 9, 1868, the 14th Amendment of the Constitution of the United States was adopted giving all persons born or naturalized in the United States the right to due process and equal protection under the law; and

WHEREAS, National League of Cities President Anthony A. Williams, Mayor, Washington, D.C., has invited local officials across the country to renew their commitment to ensuring racial equality and justice for all during the week of September 26-30, 2005, by reporting on successful programs and announcing specific action plans for the coming year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that [Mayor (name) and city council (executive director)] of [your city here and/or organization] hereby declare the week of September 26-30, 2005 as Race Equality Week in the City of [your city] and urge all citizens of [your city] to join together to support this effort;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that [Mayor (name) and city council (executive director)] of [your city here and/or organization] reaffirm our commitment to ensuring racial equality and justice in our city and to working with the National League of Cities to sustain this commitment throughout the country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that [Mayor (name) and city council (executive director)] of [your city here and/or organization] pledge to [describe specific plans for your city here] during the coming year.

Signed this [date]

[Your Name and City]



COUNT US IN!

RACE EQUALITY WEEK

September 26-30, 2005

☐ **Yes** – our city is ready to renew its commitment to promoting racial justice and equality.
COUNT US IN!

Here is an example of something our community has already done to promote racial equality that we are particularly proud of:

Here is what we *plan* to do the week of September 26-30, 2005 in our city to renew our commitment:

Please mention any other plans:

Campaign Commitment

The city of _____ is committed to ensuring racial justice and equality here and throughout America. We join with the National League of Cities in a renewed effort to confront racism and will take specific action steps this year to sustain that commitment.

SIGNATURE _____

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

NAME _____ TITLE _____

CITY _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ FAX _____

EMAIL _____

Can we use your response and email with media and in Nation's Cities Weekly? ☐ YES

Fax this form back to Gwen Wright at 202-626-3043 as soon as possible but not later than **September 5th** to ensure that your voice is counted.



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CITY ACTION STEPS TO PROMOTE RACIAL EQUALITY

What Can Your City Do?

Here are a few examples of action steps cities have taken to promote racial equality and justice to help you shape your action plans for the coming year.

Raise Awareness

Establish a citywide theme that supports the city's commitment to racial equality and use that theme extensively to increase attention to the commitment – e.g. *No Room for Racism; Building Inclusive Communities; Getting Past Denial; CommUnity, Beyond Tolerance; Working to Create A Bias-Free City; Honoring Differences; Building Bridges of Understanding.*

Create a section on your city website that highlights your commitment, shares information about progress, and creates links to other sources of useful information to raise awareness.

Create high visibility “cultures and customs” displays in city hall or other public buildings to increase awareness of different cultures, different customs, and strategies for learning from and celebrating those differences.

Build a community peace garden, by holding a community-wide yard sale and use the proceeds to improve a park or community center in an underserved neighborhood.

Develop resources/tools that reaffirm the city's commitment to ensuring racial equality and distribute those tools broadly – e.g., a bookmark with the city's pledges for the year distributed to schools and businesses, bumper stickers distributed in schools, businesses, and at city hall, a pledge statement included on all city publications during the year.

Highlight the city's commitment to ensuring racial equality in a “state of the city address.”

Create a racial equality task force to design the city's effort and to involve a diverse group of community residents in sustaining the commitment.

Work with your public library to establish a citywide book club to raise awareness about racial equality and serve as a basis for discussion groups.

Organize ethnic festivals that bring community residents together to recognize and celebrate the city's diversity.

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Encourage Dialogue

Work with local resources – e.g., a university or community college (both teachers and students), urban league, YWCA, chamber of commerce, religious group, PTA, civic group – to conduct a community forum or a race relations summit to share ideas, examine race relations in the community, and discuss strategies for ensuring racial equality.

Involve neighborhood councils in creating diversity discussions in neighborhoods and exchanges between neighborhoods with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Start a monthly “diversity roundtable” to discuss critical issues facing your community. Establish an equity forum.

Use your government access cable television channel to conduct forums with knowledgeable resources to increase understanding and provide a starting point for discussion.

Establish an ecumenical alliance. Bring people of diverse faiths and backgrounds together for retreats, workshops or potluck dinners. Be welcoming to agnostics and atheists, too.

Invite experienced facilitators to create conversations on race and racial equality. Study Circles Resource Center in Pomfret, Connecticut, is a resource that has worked with many cities across the country. Visit their web site at www.studycircles.org for more information.

Involve Youth

Conduct an essay contest for students in a particular grade or age range to share perspectives on how to improve race relations in the community. Provide a cash award for the winner and publish the winning essay(s) locally.

Involve the city youth council in developing a youth program to support the city’s commitment or establish a youth group to work with city leaders on ways to get young people engaged.

Create an event during the year that involves young people such as a youth rally, a history walk, or a student forum at a high school.

Provide regular seminars in the high school to encourage increased understanding and encourage discussion, dialogue, and commitment to promoting racial equality.

Organize joint projects involving schools from different sections of the community – and involve the parents in carrying out the projects.

Encourage schools to participate in “Teaching Tolerance’s - Mix-It Up campaign, “ that urges students to identify, question and cross social boundaries in their schools by making a commitment during school lunch periods to sit someplace new and eat lunch with someone new. Visit the website at www.mixitup.org.

Focus on City Employees and Policies

Provide training for city employees on dealing with diverse constituencies/recognizing cultural differences, preventing discrimination, understanding and preventing racial profiling, etc.

Review city policies to ensure that they support and promote racial equality and justice.

Establish an employee diversity committee to lead efforts within city hall to support the city's commitment to ensuring racial equality and justice.

Create an employee diversity newsletter, which provides information about programs, and events that highlight different cultures and traditions.

Value the input of every employee. Reward managers who do. Cast a wide net when recruiting new employees.

Schedule city council meetings and other city-sponsored meetings in different neighborhoods to connect with diverse parts of the community.

Create Connections

Explore opportunities for working jointly with neighboring communities to broaden perspectives, share ideas and experiences, engage other leaders, expand the commitment, and build a support network.

Engage school officials in the citywide effort – particularly teachers – to maximize the role of youth and build discussions on racial equality into the ongoing curriculum.

Start a “language bank” of volunteer interpreters for all languages used in your community.

Involve the Media

Issue a press release or hold a press conference during the week of September 26-30, 2005, to announce your commitment and to engage the media in supporting your efforts.

Provide regular updates to the media about progress on action steps in your community and upcoming activities and to share information from other communities.

Be a Model – Walk the Talk

Be a visible supporter and champion for this effort.

As a local elected official, participate in all events related to this campaign.

Encourage others to join the effort – even though it can be difficult, challenging, and uncomfortable to confront concerns about racism and racial equality.

Pay attention to your own behavior.

Look for resources – books, articles, organizations, people – to broaden your awareness of issues related to racism, racial equality, and racial justice.

Reach out to others who are from different ethnic backgrounds than you are.

Stay focused on the goal of promoting racial equality.

Be patient – start small and build on success.

Practice what you preach – accept others' ideas, reach out to others who are from different backgrounds, and work to move beyond tolerance to true inclusion and equality.



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ANNUAL RACE EQUALITY WEEK CITY EXAMPLES

Program Examples

Akron, Ohio

"The Coming Together Project"

The Coming Together Project began in 1993 in Akron, Ohio and gained national attention in 1997 when President Clinton visited Akron for his first Town Meeting dealing with his Race Initiative.

Coming Together began as the outgrowth of a year-long series of articles on race relations published by the Akron Beacon Journal. The series, which was awarded the 1993 Pulitzer Gold Medal for Meritorious Public Service, focused attention on disparities between blacks and whites in the areas of housing, economics, crime and educational opportunities. As part of the series, the newspaper asked organizations to band together to work on improving race relations. It called the community-based effort, Coming Together.

When the newspaper completed the series, Coming Together had more than 60 civic, social, religious, and educational organizations on board. Within two years, member organizations numbered 200. In 1995, Coming Together was chartered as a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation. *For more information, please contact Fannie Brown, Executive Director of the Coming Together Project at (330) 379-3833.*

Bartow, Florida

"Community Relations Committee"

Bartow established a Community Relations Committee that focuses on celebrating diversity in the community. To publicize the effort, the local newspapers prepared an article that focused on the purpose of the committee. To celebrate Race Equality Week, the committee organized a Unity Luncheon for the citizens and leaders of Bartow, which included county and state government employees. *For more information, please contact Linda R. Culpepper, City Clerk, at (863) 534 - 0100 or via email at LCulpepper.clerks@cityofbartow.com.*

Bellwood, Illinois

"The Bellwood Neighborhood Watch Scholarship Fund Corporation"

Bellwood's Neighborhood Watch Scholarship Fund Corporation awards college scholarships to students in low- and middle-income families of all races. The program is funded through fund-raisers and contributions from residents and corporations in the community. Each scholarship is worth \$1,000 and is available for up to four years as long as the recipient maintains a 2.0 grade point average. Recipients may use the scholarship to pay for tuition, books, and other expenses at any public or private college or university. Over 100 students received scholarships in the first 11 years of the program.

The scholarship was founded because many of Bellwood's youth between the ages of 15 and 20 were incarcerated at a cost of \$30,000 to \$40,000 a year. Because city leaders thought this money could better serve the community by educating their youth, they initiated a plan with the idea of "Replacing Crime with Education." *For more information, please contact Tonita Leshore at (708) 547-3500 or via email at TLeshore@vil.bellwood.il.us.*

Chandler, Arizona

"Human Relations Commission Community Education Initiative"

The commission initiated a change in the year 2001 toward the goal of educating the community about the cultural aspects of the City's diverse population by changing the format of their business meetings to public forums. Instead of building the meetings around the business and public comment areas, the new chair suggested bringing in local speakers on interesting and varied diversity topics thereby drawing in more of the community.

The monthly meetings include local speakers to talk about various diversity issues. A

speaker may discuss any one of a variety of topics like the history of immigration in the Southwest, Navajo Code Talkers, or Islamic culture. After the speaker is finished, residents have the opportunity to ask questions. The commission also plans events in the community to celebrate the various cultures of Chandler residents including a Latino film festival and a unity festival. *For more information, please contact Leah Powell, Assistant to the City Manager, at (480) 782-2217 or via email at Leah.Powell@ci.chandler.az.us.*

Charlotte, North Carolina

“Race: The Power of an Illusion” Community Viewing

The City of Charlotte, along with 12 organizations, sponsored a public viewing of the PBS documentary “Race: The Power of an Illusion” on three consecutive Thursdays. After each viewing, group facilitators led discussions with topic experts and community members about how race impacts the Charlotte community. *For more information, please contact Mindy Levine, Charlotte Community Relations Committee Secretary at (704) 336-3184 or via email at melevine@ci.charlotte.nc.us.*

Cleveland, Ohio

“Keeping Alive the Legacy, I Have a Dream”

This program showcases the efforts of the City of Cleveland and the surrounding communities within its region to come together to celebrate and honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Cleveland’s initiative hosts the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Concert and the Cultural Diversity through Hoops program, which brings the message of Dr. King to all people and makes them more aware of the gift that diversity brings to their community. *For more information, please contact Councilmember Roosevelt Coats at (216) 664-4743.*

East Palo Alto, California

“Below Market Rate Housing Program”

East Palo Alto passed an ordinance (No. 247) to establish the “Below Market Rate Housing Program.” The program was created to maintain the city’s rich ethnic diversity; provide safe, affordable housing for residents at all income levels; prevent community gentrification; and avoid the displacement of long-term residents. The legislation specifies that 20 percent of all new residential units constructed in the city be affordable and made available to households with less than

50 percent of area median income. New rental housing would target households with incomes as low as 35 percent of the area median income. The city conducted marketing and outreach to increase diversity in the applicant pool. The program introduced a lottery system because eligible applicants far exceeded the number of available units at any one time. *For more information, please contact Lisa Hamburger, Housing Services Director, at (650) 853-3120 or via email at LHamburger@cityofepa.com.*

Enterprise, Alabama

“Multi-Cultural Club”

The Enterprise Multi-Cultural Club was formed to provide an opportunity for people of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds to meet one another in a social setting that focuses on either a country or ethnic group so that participants can learn about the history, contributions, and customs of other people.

Enterprise’s elected officials work with community residents to create events that are both educational and entertaining. Projects include events like a presentation on South Korean culture and history followed by a musical performance, programs featuring African-American history in Enterprise and the surrounding region, and a Cinco de Mayo celebration.

The format allows them to learn about their neighbors as well as open the lines of communication between the various constituent communities and local government. The diversity of Enterprise’s population, composed primarily of African Americans, Koreans and Latin-Americans, was the catalyst for the Multi-Cultural Club. *For more information, please contact Linda Bryan, Special Projects Coordinator, at (334) 348-2603 or via email at LBryan@cityofenterprise.net.*

Fayetteville, North Carolina

“Study Circles Program”

The Study Circles program in Fayetteville is a problem-solving initiative that involves residents in face-to-face discussions about race relations issues that affect their community. The program features small, peer-led discussion groups that allow everyone the opportunity to express their opinions. Study Circles gathers people from a cross-section of racial, age, religious, and gender backgrounds into small groups to talk about and share their experiences, concerns and perceptions of each other. Many of the city’s elected officials and employees take part in the discussions in order to increase the dialogue between residents and the government and to bolster their mutual trust. In its first

four years, 300 people participated in the program at 15 different events. The program includes special Study Circles sessions for community and law enforcement, schools, youths, churches, and interfaith dialogues. *For more information, please contact Ron McElrath, Human Relations Director, at (920) 433-1696 or via email at RMcElrath@ci.fay.nc.us.*

Federal Way, Washington

"Diversity Commission"

Federal Way's Diversity Commission discusses diversity issues in the city and plans programs to promote diversity in the community. The Commission consists of nine members who are appointed by the city council, and serve three-year terms. They advise the City Council on policy matters involving the community's cultural and ethnic differences, ensuring that these differences are considered in the decision-making process, "to help Federal Way in becoming a community which is united amidst diversity, where each individual is respected, equally valued, equally needed and equally cherished. Equality is not sameness; equality is equivalent value. They also plan and host an annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, hold Community Night Events that celebrate the cultures of various groups in the community, and educate the community about diversity. In addition they provide training sessions to teach residents how to deal with issues such as institutional racism, and donate culturally diverse books to libraries for young readers. *For more information, please contact Trise Moore at (253) 661-4016 or via email at themoorecorp@yahoo.com.*

Fort Worth, Texas

"Community Relations Department"

Fort Worth's Community Relations Department promotes equal opportunity and greater access to government and governmental services for its multiracial and multicultural population. The mission of the department is to empower residents, neighborhoods, and youth by promoting opportunity, knowledge, inclusion, and engagement. The department provides staff support to the Commission for Women, the Mayor's Committee on Persons with Disabilities, and the Human Relations Commission. It also hosts multicultural celebrations, organizes special projects for neighborhoods, provides information on city services to residents, conducts leadership training for youth and neighborhood leaders, and investigates complaints of discrimination. *For more information, please contact Vanessa Ruiz-Boling at (817) 392-7534 or via email at Vanessa.Boling@fortworthgov.org.*

Hampton, Virginia

"Ad Hoc Leadership Group" (AHLG)

AHLG was created in 1998 as the reactive arm of the Citizen's Unity Commission (CUC), providing Hampton citizens with credible leaders to review incidents that threaten Hampton's racial and cultural harmony. The leaders have six responsibilities that shape the direction and context of the work of the AHLG: data gathering, clarifying misinformation and getting the facts out, looking for bridges; offering options and; getting a consensus and agreement on the end product of an inquiry. *For more information, please contact John L. Johnson, Executive Director of the Ad Hoc Leadership Group, at (757) 727-1379 or via email at JLJohnson@hampton.gov.*

Hattiesburg, Mississippi

"Neighborhood Revitalization Program"

As part of its Neighborhood Revitalization Program, Hattiesburg established a Council of Neighborhoods, comprised of representatives from each of the 33 neighborhood associations in the city. City officials meet quarterly with the Council to update members on major projects or happenings in the city. Representatives are then given the opportunity to address officials directly and ask questions pertaining to their neighborhoods. Each concern is addressed openly by the director of a city department or the mayor and must be answered at the next quarterly meeting. *For more information, please contact Linda McMurtrey, City Planner, at (601) 545-4594 or via email at LMcMurtrey@hattiesburgms.com.*

Houston, Texas

"Mayor's Office of Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance Division"

Houston's Mayor's Office of Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance Division (AACC) is committed to providing quality certification, compliance, business development, and training programs to promote equal opportunity at every level of city government. The AACC provides training for city employees on equal opportunity topics and promotes equal employment and economic opportunity to all Houstonians. The city provides minority/women small business owners with faxes on upcoming contracting opportunities, fosters economic growth and development of businesses by offering technical assistance workshops and seminars throughout the community, and coordinates efforts to comply with the Americans with Disabilities

Act (ADA) including investigations of ADA complaints involving city services, programs, and facilities. It also works to increase city contract opportunities for local persons with disabilities business enterprises. *For more information, please contact Velma Laws, Assistant Deputy Director, at (713) 837-9018 or via email at VLaws@aad.ci.houston.tx.us.*

Lake City, South Carolina

"Race Relations and Cultural Diversity Summit"

Lake City held a Race Relations and Cultural Diversity Summit to celebrate Race Equality Week. The event featured a day-long series of speakers and facilitated break out sessions to discuss diversity issues. *For more information, please contact Councilmember Kenneth Feagins at (843) 394-5421 ext. 221 or via email at cherlinem@cityoflakecity.org.*

Lima, Ohio

"Study Circles Program"

Lima community leaders worked with city clergy, the Ohio State University at Lima, the media, and the Study Circles Resource Center (SCRC) to create ongoing opportunities for candid discussions on race relations. Using the SCRC's manual "Can't We all Just Get Along?," thousands of city residents participate in ongoing, frank, discussions examining different views, experiences, and insights. By helping participants establish relationships within their communities, study circles have reinforced the fabric of the Lima community. The groups have provided volunteers for tutoring, recreational activities for young adults, and workers for the city's soup kitchens. A Study Circles Council, composed of church coalitions, elected officials, community groups, and business organizations, was formed to coordinate the groups and funnel ideas from citizens to city and county government. Researchers at Ohio State University surveyed Lima participants before and after the study circles and found a shift in attitudes toward greater acceptance of other racial and ethnic groups. *For more information, please contact City Hall at (419) 228-5462.*

Longmont, Colorado

"Our Community: Different People, Common Ground Week"

Our Community: Different People, Common Ground Week was a week long celebration that included the

City of Longmont Youth Center and the Coalition for Women in Crisis partnering together in the creation of a poster to celebrate diversity.

The young people from both organizations created art works that depict themselves of their ethnicity or elements of varying ethnicity in our community. The artwork was joined together in a collage format to create the first "Our Community: Different People, common Ground Week" poster. This poster was distributed throughout City and Coalition facilities and was made available to schools and local organizations that work with young people. *For more information, please contact Ann Everhart, Director of Human Relations, at (303) 651-8609.*

Lynwood, California

"We Are One"

We Are One is a policy making philosophy and strategy formally adopted by Lynwood's City Council in 2000 that reinvents the community's approach to cultural diversity. The evidence can be found throughout the city in numerous cultural programs and landmarks that represent people of diverse cultural backgrounds living in Lynwood.

The city's comprehensive cultural programming includes celebrations of traditional and nontraditional holidays, and hosting of delegations from Mexico and Russia through the Sister City program. To celebrate diversity, the city creates landmarks named after historical figures such as Cesar Chavez, Rosa Parks, and Nelson Yamamoto. The city also features a development called Plaza Mexico which houses hundreds of small enterprises operated by immigrants from Europe, Asia, and North America. *For more information, please contact Autra Adams, Program Coordinator, at (310) 603-0220 or via email at AAdams@lynwood.ca.us.*

Mesa, Arizona

"2004 Race Equality Week"

The City of Mesa, Arizona's Diversity Office and Human Relations Advisory Board hosted the fourth annual conference, "Honoring Our Past, Cultivating Our Future." The conference included a keynote speaker and facilitated discussions that focused on the history and life of interracial cooperation, including examples of successes in Arizona. Over 100 participants attended breakout sessions that included an intercultural conflict resolution workshop and a viewing and discussion of the Mesa Civil Rights history video. *For more information, please contact Mary Berumen, Diversity Office Director, at (480) 644-5033 or via email at Mary.Berumen@cityofmesa.org.*

New Smyrna Beach, Florida

"Respect and Unity Group"

The Respect and Unity Group is an outgrowth of the concern expressed by citizens of New Smyrna Beach over the resentment and anger existing between the races in the community demonstrated by speakers at a Martin Luther King Celebration in 1998.

The group's primary goal has been to promote cultural and racial unity and to educate people about the value of diversity to the community. It has sponsored and participated in such community events as an annual retreat attended by whites and blacks, the purpose of which is to provide an informal setting where attendees confront their prejudices under the guidance of trained facilitators and work together to eliminate misconceptions.

The Respect and Unity Group has enlisted the aid of community members, local government officials, and such organizations as the Southeast Volusia Chamber of Commerce, Daytona Beach Community College, and New Smyrna Beach High School in realizing its goal of developing an attitude of respect and unity, "one person at a time." *For more information, please contact City Hall at (386) 424-2100.*

Newport News, Virginia

"Framework for the Future"

This program is the city's citizen based planning process to create a community-derived consensus from diverse viewpoints to ultimately reflect the citizens' visions on the future economic, physical and social development of their city.

The Framework for the Future articulates their visions and goals for Newport News, and recommends the policies, strategies, and methods of implementation necessary to accomplish them. It deals with issues that are important to citizens, including crime and public safety, drug abuse, traffic congestion, public education, environment and air and water quality. *For more information, please contact Orlando Riutort, Manager of Comprehensive Planning, at (757) 926-3831 or via email at ARiutort@ci.newport-news.va.us.*

North Miami, Florida

"Music @ the Plaza"

Music @ the Plaza is a concert series of free-admission, free-food, concerts, offered the second Friday of each month, which feature a different genre of music each month, with corresponding cuisine, designed to highlight the cultural diversity of the city. *For more informa-*

tion, please contact Julie Washington, Public Information Officer, at (305) 893-6511 or via email at JWashington@ci.north-miami.fl.us.

Oakland, California

"Equal Access to Services ordinance"

Oakland became the first city in the nation to pass an ordinance to provide equal access to government information and services, regardless of the primary language spoken, through translated public material and bilingual personnel in public contact positions. The ordinance requires that the city provide language access through translated materials and bilingual personnel in "public contact" for residents that are limited or non-English speakers. The city's telephone message system operates in five languages. Employees who work in public contact positions must pass language assessment tests at intermediate or near fluent levels. *For more information, please contact Deborah R. Liu, Equal Access Director, at (510) 238-2368 or via email at DLiu@oaklandnet.com.*

Ocala, Florida

"2004 Race Equality Week"

Ocala, Florida celebrated its second annual "One Ocala One America" week, which featured six events that focused on racial harmony and cultural awareness. Events included a Hispanic Festival, Faith Focus and Prayer Breakfast, a racial harmony musical show, a Boys and Girls Club event and a Multi-Cultural Festival on the downtown square. *For more information, please contact Councilmember Mary S. Rich, Program Chair, at (352) 629-8401.*

Omaha, Nebraska

"Commission on Race and Community Relations"

The creation of the Commission was to address concerns of racial inequality and to create a more harmonious city. The goal of the Commission is to produce constructive, fact-based recommendations for substantive, positive, progressive and lasting change for the Omaha community. The Mayor appointed three citizens from different racial and economic backgrounds to co-chair the Commission and personally invited 186 business people, community activists and religious leaders to participate.

The Commission is comprised of seven committees dealing with race relations in the areas of Law Enforcement-Judiciary; Education; Employment; Housing; Health Care; Economic Development; and Media.

As a result of the Commission's reports and recommendations, the Mayor issued an Executive Order re-emphasizing the city's commitment to treating all employees, customers, and citizens of Omaha with respect and fairness without the biases of racism or discrimination. The Mayor also issued a challenge to the Omaha City Council, Douglas County Board of Commissioners, businesses, corporations, and other organizations to make a similar pledge. As a result of the Mayor's challenge, over 25 businesses and corporations in the City of Omaha have responded to the challenge by releasing their own pledge against racism and discrimination. *For more information, please contact Kellie Paris Asaka, Director of Human Relations, at (402) 444-5055.*

Opelika, Alabama

"Race Relations Improvement Initiative"

Having identified race relations as a priority city issue, Opelika created the "Race Relations Improvement Initiative," managed by the Race Relations Task Force and Multicultural Business Council. The guiding principal of the Race Relations Improvement Initiative is that only through education, increased communication, and breaking down barriers between groups can race relations be improved and cultural diversity encouraged. The Race Relations Task Force has 25 members, with the Mayor and Council members acting as ex officio members.

The Initiative has six main goals: 1) Increase diversity training workshops for city employees and other citizen groups, 2) Increase communication between minority and non-minority groups, 3) Support minority-owned businesses, 4) Encourage the cooperation of all the city's religious organizations, 5) Better address the needs of teenagers of color, and 6) Encourage diversity in civic programs. The city also offers a diversity training workshop for local elected officials and decision makers from Opelika and neighboring cities. *For more information, please contact Barbara Patton, Mayor, at (334) 705-5150 or via email at BPatton@ci.opelika.al.us.*

Page, Arizona

"Diversity Awareness Week"

Page's Diversity Awareness Week educates citizens about different cultures and ethnicities in the area. Designed to invite citizens to celebrate individuality by building a community that values diversity, members of the community are urged to participate in a variety of promotions and events targeted at all ages to highlight the unique community. A large advertising campaign and promotional blitz is conducted to alert citi-

zens of the celebrations. To ensure that the activities are not forgotten, a committee solicits feedback from the community about what can be improved and what people liked. Local schools hold essay and poster contests to get young people involved with diversity awareness, and schools integrate the curriculum with various fine arts projects to showcase different cultures. The week-long event is done with no monetary support. Plans to expand the celebration include the development of an ethnic cookbook, with proceeds going to support Diversity Awareness. *For more information, please contact Judy Hart, Library Director, at (520) 645-4272 or via email at JHart@ci.page.az.us.*

Phoenix, Arizona

"City of Phoenix Diversity Task Force"

The Diversity Task Force is made up of 23 employees from 16 city departments and all levels of the organization created to ensure that the city's workforce reflects the diversity of Phoenix to better serve its diverse population. It studies city programs and services, particularly recruiting, hiring, promotion, and training processes. The task force then makes recommendations, including promoting diversity in advertising and outreach, increasing career opportunities for employees, building systems that ensure fair selection in hiring, and strengthening efforts to value diversity and promote equal treatment.

Its recommendations have resulted in strengthened employee efforts to work together as a team heightened creativity in providing outstanding service to the community, and launched a city-wide embrace of diversity to meet residents' needs and go above and beyond customer expectations. *For more information, please contact Carole Coles Henry, Director of the Phoenix Equal Opportunity Department at (602) 262-6258 or via email at Carole.Coles.Henry@phoenix.gov.*

Pittsburg, Kansas

"Pittsburg Area Community Outreach"

Pittsburg's Police Department, in collaboration with a local Spanish-speaking community activist, organized the Pittsburg Area Community Outreach (PACO). This community-based organization was established to assist newly arrived immigrants in their transition into the community, as well as introduce longtime residents to the languages, cultures, and positive contributions of their newest residents. PACO has an organizational treasury that intentionally never exceeds \$300 because board members are encouraged to contribute their personal, professional and organizational resources to

multiple projects as they are conceived and implemented in the community. *For more information, please contact Mike Hall, Chief of Police, at (620) 235-0400 or via email MHall@pittks.org.*

Reno, Nevada

"Four Steps into the Future"

Reno's "Four Steps into the Future" program was formed to educate youth about the range of career opportunities available in municipal government; to encourage youth to participate in civic affairs; to expand the diversity in future applicant pools for City positions; and to strengthen relationships with area schools. As a result of this innovative partnership between the city and local school district, high school students are able to earn academic credit towards high school graduation while participating in a city-sponsored internship program. In addition to learning about the history of municipal government, its day-to-day activities, and its structure, the students are expected to develop resumes, earn letters of recommendation, include key project materials, and to conduct independent research. City representatives are tapped for their knowledge and area of expertise to support the course curriculum. *For more information, please contact Laura Dickey, Diversity and Training Manager, at (775) 334-3123 or via email at LDickey@ci.reno.nv.us.*

Rochester, New York

"Firefighter Trainee Program"

In an effort to build a fire department that better represents the population of the city it serves, and to offer a quality career to city high school graduates, the Rochester Fire Department implemented the Firefighter Trainee Program. The program is a paid, comprehensive two-year program that offers job training and work experience to city high school students, of whom 75 percent are minorities. Candidates who successfully complete the program are blended in with the list of yearly recruits. This drastically reduces the time it takes to reach the city's diversification target number. Students participate in graded, credited classes, which cover a variety of subjects using high school and Fire Department instructors. Upon successful completion of their first year, trainees sit for a written and physical agility exam and, if successful, become permanent, part-time city employees. This is a New York State Civil Service recognized program and can be replicated in any municipality statewide. *For more information, please contact Tom Haley, Senior Administrative Analyst, at (585) 428-6514.*

St. Martinville, Louisiana

"St. Martinville Cultural Heritage Center"

The Center exhibits the hardships and struggles of two very different cultures, en route to the New World. One culture, the Acadians, who were exiled from their land and force to choose either another place as their home, the other was the Africans who were captured and enslaved, then taken to the New World without knowing where their home would be. These two very strong peoples have shown their likeness through survival, by living together for almost 250 years, never losing their enriching contributions to the New World.

Through this project, the City of St. Martinsville seeks to educate not only their community, but also over 100,000 tourists who annually visit the city. *For more information, please contact Danielle Fontenette, Curator/Director of the African American Museum, at (337) 394-2250, or contact Jolene Adam, Curator/Director of the Museum of the Acadian Memorial at (337) 394-2258.*

Saline, Michigan

"Dine Out for Diversity"

Saline's Youth Council sponsors the Dine Out for Diversity program, created to increase public awareness and acceptance of the rich ethnic and cultural diversity within the Saline area. Each month, the youth select a restaurant in the area and a dine-out night to promote a community ethnic dining experience. The profits from the event are used to support youth involvement in local government. *For more information, please contact Larry Stoeber, City Manager, at (734) 429-3148.*

Southfield, Michigan

"Celebrating Diversity Programs"

These programs actively reach out to Southfield's culturally diverse community by celebrating the unique heritage of its people, specifically its Original World Market, International Cafes, and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Peace Walk and Program.

The Original World Market focuses on engaging participants in a unique cultural exchange. The three-day festival is open to the public, and proceeds benefit the International Institute's enrichment programs for newly naturalized citizens. The event begins with an official swearing-in ceremony and includes an exciting international dance festival and an old work-style marketplace.

The International Café Series includes three evening dinners with entertainment, such as an evening in

the Middle East (Chaldean Culture), an Evening of African-American Culture, and an Evening in Eastern Europe.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Peace Walk and Program is a grassroots program, which involves community leaders, residents, city officials, and the Mayor. It commemorates the national holiday, celebrates the legacy of Dr. King, and promotes diversity. The Peace Walk attracts hundreds of people who walk from a local church to Southfield Pavilion. *For more information, please contact Nimrod Rosenthal, Community Relations Director, at (248) 354-4854 or via email at N_Rosenthal@cityofsouthfield.com.*

Stockton, California

"Mayor's Campaign for Racial Harmony and Fairness Task Force"

Stockton's Racial Harmony and Fairness Task Force addresses racial, cultural, and religious tensions in the city, and creates solutions to solve these problems. It consists of 26 top-level administrators of school districts, religious agencies, city and county offices, business groups, and health organizations. The task force holds community forums to address diversity issues and has a panel which hears presentations on experiences with racism. Forums have included discussions of education, law enforcement, jobs and unemployment practices, the faith community, and community goals. In response to issues raised in the forums, policies addressing racism and other problems are outlined and explained to the appropriate departments. In addition, the Task Force publishes a column in the city's daily newspaper that highlights different cultures of Stockton. *For more information, please contact Florence Low, Senior Administrative Analyst, at (209) 937-8279 or via email at Florence.Low@ci.stockton.ca.us.*

Tallahassee, Florida

"Making Municipal Government part of the Solution"

Sensing a need to address issues of race, the Mayor created a multi-pronged initiative on Race Relations in 1997. The Mayor's support gave the initiative the necessary visibility to engage the entire community. This visibility afforded a real opportunity to break down public resistance and build support for enhanced racial harmony. The initiative was designed to address issues of communication; information sharing; conflict resolution; and youth concern.

Tallahassee sought to enhance communication through structured dialogue that was accomplished by

Community-Wide Study Circles. Diverse groups of individuals, guided by trained facilitators, shared their experiences, identified concerns and created plans of action.

The City brought people together to share information with a city-hosted "Summit on Race Relations." The Summit goal was to empower individuals to take responsibility for "Up Rooting Racism; Planting Seeds of Racial Healing".

The City addressed conflict resolution by implementing a non-violence training program for law enforcement officers, public school students, community leaders and government employees. The curriculum was based on principles utilized by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Tallahassee recognized the invaluable contributions youth can make in planning the future for the community. Thus, the Youth Human Relations Council was created for youth involvement in 1999. *For more information, please contact the Tallahassee Equal Opportunity Office at (850) 891-8290.*

Topeka, Kansas

"Diversity Awareness Program"

The City of Topeka implemented a comprehensive, aggressive campaign to open the Topeka community to the benefits of recognizing, understanding and celebrating racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Among the activities were: A three day Diversity Awareness Convocation; creation of the Mayor's Council on Diversity; creation of the Mayor's Council on Race; targeted minority/women business enterprise activities; department head and management staff diversity sessions; and a variety of smaller scale efforts. These efforts to close the gaps between diverse populations are intended to bring harmony to the City of Topeka.

A number of these activities are carried into the local school districts to establish understanding of persons who are different in the youth population. It is hoped that these activities will cultivate a new generation of acceptance, wherein racism and general discrimination will be eliminated in the near future. *For more information, please contact Robert Bugg, Director of Human Resources, at (785) 368-3867.*

Tukwila, Washington

"Equity and Diversity Commission"

Tukwila established the nine-member Equity and Diversity Commission to ensure that every individual in the community is treated with dignity and has equal access to resources and opportunity. The commission designed and distributed a multi-lingual community

access guide that presents information in Vietnamese, Russian, Somali, Arabic, Srpski (Serbian/Bosnian/Croatian), and Spanish. It also adopted and promoted the "Tukwila Pledge Against Racism" by displaying the statement on posters at public events. Community members and regional visitors are encouraged to sign the pledge to continue to work towards eliminating prejudice. *For more information, please contact Lucy Lauterbach, Legislative Coordinator, at (206) 433-1834 or via email at LLauterbach@ci.tukwila.wa.us.*

Tulare, California

"Cultural Understanding Committee"

Tulare formed the Cultural Understanding Committee, which is comprised of representatives of the multiple cultural interests in the community. The committee planned the mayor's summit on cultural understanding, as well as a celebration of the city's diversity at a community-wide celebration. One result of the committed has been the appointment of LaHu liaisons to help immigrants be aware of and access public services. The committee's mission is "to promote ethnic and economic harmony through understanding and celebration. To this end, we aim to discuss our differences, understand them, and celebrate our diversity." *For more information, please contact Kevin B. Northcraft, City Manager, at (559) 684-4200 or via email at KNorthcraft@ci.tulare.ca.us.*

Virginia Beach, Virginia

"Race Equality Week 2004"

In Virginia Beach, Virginia, the mayor and city council declared Race Equality Week by presenting a proclamation to the Human Relations Commission and attendees at the monthly council meeting. Efforts also included the first Diversity Art Contest for all Virginia Beach school age children. The contest embodied the

idea that there is no better way to educate the world than through the eyes of a child.

The Human Relations Commission also launched its Eleventh Annual Awards contest. Each year the commission recognizes the noteworthy contributions of individuals and groups providing meritorious service in the pursuit of understanding cultural diversity and advocacy of human rights. *For more information, please contact the Virginia Beach Department of Human Resources at (757) 427-8374.*

Westport, Connecticut

"Together Effectively Achieving Multiculturalism"

Westport established a multicultural awareness initiative with 19 appointed residents called "Together Effectively Achieving Multiculturalism" (TEAM). Its mission is to bring together diverse members of the community to learn from one another, analyze issues, evaluate options and recommend actions to the city. TEAM celebrated Racial Equality Week with a potluck supper showing the multiculturalism of Westport. *For more information, please contact Town Hall at (203) 341-1000.*

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

"2004 Race Equality Week"

The City of Winston-Salem, North Carolina held the "From a Child's Eye: Race Equality Celebration, which included first grade students visiting city hall and performing songs of celebration on racial equality and diversity. Other events included the Mayor's Racial Healing Forum, and a high school student forum, entitled, "Race Relations from a High School Perspective." *For more information, please contact Wanda Allen-Abraham, Director of Human Relations, at (336) 727-2429 or via email at WandaEA@cityofws.org.*